



Network of European Regions for
a Sustainable and Competitive Tourism

NECSTouR

Action plan established from the results of NECSTouR's conference - October 2008

Working group 4 Active conservation of Heritage and Identity

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Foreword

The Group's works have enabled us to identify the issues which our future activity and attention needs to be focused on.

The actions concerning the conservation and promotion of heritage are different when we speak about cultural and historical heritage or natural one. Indeed, the stakeholders, the methods and the legislation for example aren't the same. For this reason, a greater emphasis has been given to cultural heritage and Identities conservation at the Marseille conference and this working group could be divided in the future in two:

- one about cultural heritage and Identity ,
- one about natural heritage.

The second one could be developed as followed:

- 1- An inventory, state of the art of good practices and experiences developed among the NECSTOUR regions, for the protection and the promotion in the field of natural heritage
- 2- Common actions to develop by technical exchanges/ training of professionals, and awareness of tourists

This proposition will have to be validated in the next conference in june 2009.

The working group therefore concentrated on the question of cultural and identities conservation and the works were organized by taking into account the following four Key words:

- **Integration**
- **Destinations**
- **Experiences**
- **Next steps**

Integration: *the strength and interests which the NECSTouR Network has aroused comes from it being a “laboratory” where sound Models for the implementation of the European Agenda’s principles can be compared and drafted. The Agenda’s key strength is that it integrates sectors and issues which harmonically contribute to defining the principles of Sustainability. Therefore, also Cultural Heritage and Identity are to be constantly related to the ten themes defined by the Network’s constitution protocol (the Florence Charter).*

Destinations: *our work will always need to refer to specific tourist destinations. We need to focus on the consequences that each theoretical-scientific model or strategy may have for each Tourist Destination. Hence, we need to identify the various referees of each destination.*

Experiences: *we first need to evaluate our experiences at specific destinations, we need to overcome the idea of good practices only, and to pursue shared models for the analysis of experiences and realities.*

Next steps: *we should concentrate our work on the prospects and competitive future of destinations, for the purpose of guaranteeing competitive perspectives to the Macro Destination: Europe (MDE). We need to experiment with new planning models for the tourist development of specific Destinations.*

Bearing such key words in mind, the NECSTouR Network will have to act as the regions’ reference point in their concrete and experimental implementation of their own policies.

1. Defining the *Integrated NECSTouR model to be experimented*

The Region plays a central and essential role: it must act as a constant reference point, supporting the work of the tourist Destinations that have been chosen to experiment the model.

- **Firstly**, it shall identify local stakeholders and make them aware of their responsibilities, thus creating a sort of Board for each destination for the definition of local development goals.
- **Secondly**, it shall lay down the terms of the SWOT analysis that is to take place before planning development actions for at least a ten-year period.
- **Thirdly**, it shall define the multi-year development goals to guarantee the destination’s competitiveness.
- **Fourthly**, it shall identify the indicators to be measured and monitored with respect to the 10 issues to be controlled (see Table 1)

Table 1

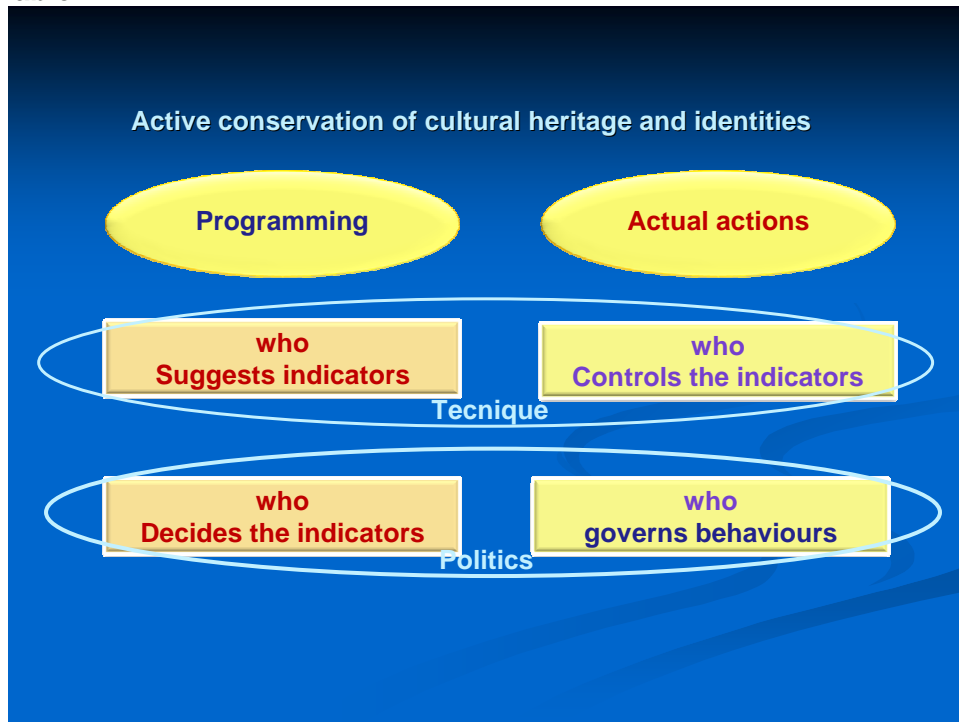
Issues:

- Impact of transport
- Quality of life of residents and tourists
- Quality of work
- Widening the relation between demand/offer (geographical and seasonal concentration of tourism)
- Active conservation of cultural heritage related to tourism
- Active conservation of environmental heritage related to tourism
- Active conservation of distinctive identities of destinations
- Reduction and optimisation of use of natural resources with particular reference to water
- Reduction and optimisation of energy consumption
- Reduction of waste and better waste management

It is essential for the two issues being further examined (circled in yellow) to be always related to the other ones (**integration**).

In order to identify the indicators to be measured/monitored, we need to specify that two action levels (**programming** and **actual actions**) and two responsibility levels (**policy** and **technique**) are involved when identifying and using such indicators (see Table 2).

Table 2.



Choosing Pilot Destinations

The experimentation varies according to the characteristics of each destination. Hence, we have identified the types of tourist destinations (Table 3) where cultural heritage is the key or essential element thereof.

Table 3



However, we need to identify other types of Destinations (see Table 4) whose offer is different from the cultural one. The approach is very different in this case, since their cultural heritage is potentially open to greater risks.

Table 4.



Within the group of destinations, we need to identify the areas and places we should pay close attention to when defining their prospects for development (**valorisation/protection**).

Moreover, we need to differentiate between the problems pertaining to physical heritage (Table 5), and those relating to Immaterial Heritage (see Table 6).

Table 5

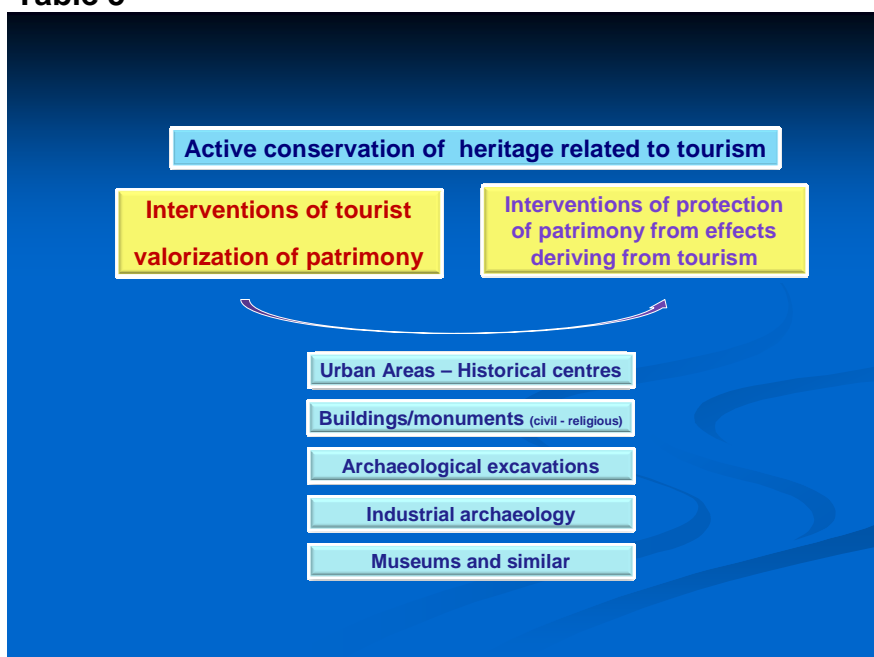
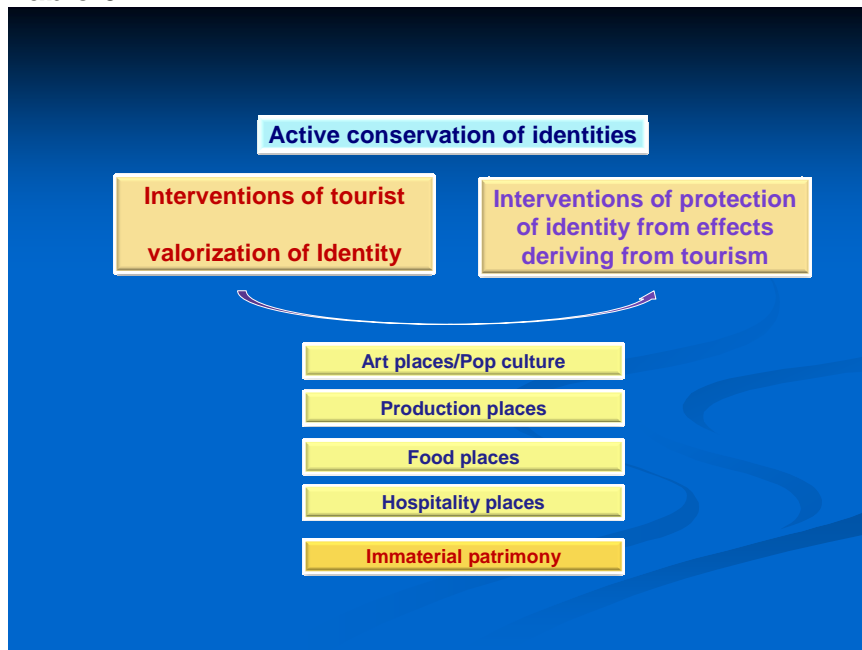


Table 6



2. The actions required

In the light of the above, we envisage the following actions:

- 1)** to promote the NECSTouR Model among public and private local actors;
- 2)** to guarantee support and pay close attention to the destinations that are interested in participating in the experimentation and suiting the model to their own realities, and to promote the creation of a regional network of such destinations, for the exchange of experiences and good practices;
- 3)** to promote the creation of a Board for each destination and of a system for the measurement of indicators for each of the ten issues;
- 4)** to promote and seek the Universities' active participation, above all to guarantee their necessary cultural and scientific contribution to destinations experimenting the model, which shall be focused especially on studying, suiting, applying and measuring indicators;
- 5)** to create an intersectorial Board within the Region that helps, on the one hand, to develop its relationship with the many sectors mentioned above, and, on the other, to ensure the involvement of representatives of local stakeholders and enterprises;

- 6) thanks to the support of the Board, to revise all incentive measures (promoting tourism and other fields related to cultural heritage) that are offered to local authorities and to enterprises in the light of the NECSTouR's goals, and to introduce concrete advantages (priority and reserves of resources) to the benefit of the subjects that work within the regional network of destinations involved in the experimentation;
- 7) to support the activity of centres that offer technical assistance to enterprises and local authorities so as to guarantee the offer of adequate support to local realities and the necessary transfer of research and innovation.